

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT ANTHONY LEWIS OP-ED COLUMN THE NEW YORK TIMES THURSDAY JUNE 23 HEADED "RAISING A STANDARD,.
2. LONDON, JUNE 22--ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED DIPLOMATS IN LONDON, A PERSON WITH NO TIME FOR ILLUSIONS, WAS TALKING ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY.
3. "AT FIRST I REACTED WITH PROFESSIONAL SKEPTICISM," HE SAID. ,I WORRIED ABOUT JEOPARDIZING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. I WORRIED ABOUT RAISING EXPECTATIONS TOO HIGH, AS DULLES DID IN HUNGARY.
4. "NOW I AM ASHAMED OF HOW I FELT. THE CONCERNS ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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NECESSARY. BUT I HAVE COME TO SEE THAT CARTER IS RAISING A STANDARD TO WHICH THE WISE AND HONEST CAN REPAIR AGAIN IN AMERICA. AND HE HAS MADE HUMAN RIGHTS PART--A USEFUL PART--OF THE DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE OVER A VERY WIDE AREA.

5. THE COMMENT WAS IN STRIKING CONTRAST TO WHAT HAS

BEEN HEARD LATELY FROM SOME WASHINGTON COMMENTATORS. THEY HAVE SOUNDED INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF THE CARTER HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, CALLING IT IMPRUDENT AND ILL-CONCEIVED. THEY HAVE PUT THE PRESIDENT DOWN AS AN AMATEUR WHO DOES MORE HARM THAN GOOD BY HIS INSISTENCE ON TALKING OUT LOUD ABOUT TORTURE AND OTHER BRUTALITIES PRACTICED BY GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD.

6. DURING SEVERAL WEEKS ON THIS SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC, I HAVE ASKED FOREIGN POLICY PROFESSIONALS AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, TRYING CONSCIENTIOUSLY TO CANVASS THEIR VIEWS WITHOUT BIAS. THEY HAVE ALL MENTIONED PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE RAISED. BUT WITHOUT EXCEPTION THEY HAVE PRAISED THE POLICY AS A WHOLE, AND MOST OF THEM HAVE SPOKEN OF IT WITH AN ENTHUSIASM UNUSUAL IN ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENTAL FIGURES.

7. THE BASIC REASON FOR THE FAVORABLE VIEW IS EVIDENTLY THE ONE GIVEN BY THE DIPLOMAT QUOTED ABOVE--THAT THE PRESIDENT IS RAISING A STANDARD. HE IS GIVING NOT JUST AMERICANS BUT PEOPLE IN THE WEST GENERALLY A SENSE THAT THEIR VALUES ARE BEING ASSERTED AGAIN, AFTER YEARS OF SILENCE IN THE FACE OF TYRANNY AND BRUTALITY.

8. ONE CRITICISM THAT IS TROUBLING IS THE CHARGE THAT MR. CARTER'S APPROACH HAS ACTUALLY MADE LIFE WORSE FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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SOVIET DISSIDENTS. IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SEVERE CRACKDOWN ON THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENT THIS YEAR. NINE MEMBERS OF AN UNOFFICIAL COMMITTEE FORMED TO MONITOR SOVIET COMPLIANCE WITH THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH TREASON, A CAPITAL OFFENSE.

9. THE IMPRESSION OF SOVIETOLOGISTS HERE IS THAT THE CRACKDOWN WAS MOTIVATED IN THE MAIN BY A DESIRE TO SUPPRESS INTERNAL CRITICISM BEFORE THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE ON THE WORKING OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT. THE HIGH-LEVEL DECISION TO TAKE A TOUGHER LINE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN MADE LAST FALL.

10. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS PROBABLY TRUE THAT SOVIET OUTRAGE AT MR. CARTER FOR SPEAKING OUT AND FOR COMMUNICATING DIRECTLY WITH DISSIDENT FIGURES HAS SHARPENED THE CRACKDOWN. SUCH A POLICY MAY WELL LOWER THE OFFICIAL SOVIET THRESHOLD OF TOLERANCE FOR DISSENT, AT LEAST FOR A TIME. THOSE OF US WHO SUPPORT THE POLICY MUST RECOGNIZE THAT INDIVIDUAL RUSSIANS MAY SUFFER.

11. MORAL QUALMS ON THAT SCORE SHOULD BE EASED BY THE FACT THAT THE DISSIDENTS THEMSELVES WANT THE PRESIDENT TO KEEP SPEAKING OUT, WHATEVER THE COST TO THEMSELVES. ONE OF THE BRAVEST OF THEM--VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY, WHO FIRST EXPOSED IN DETAIL THE PRACTICE OF COMMITTING POLITICAL DISSIDENTS TO MENTAL INSTITUTIONS--SAID IN A RECENT BBC INTERVIEW:

12. "NOT ONE SINGLE PERSON WHO IS CONNECTED WITH IT (THE SOVIET MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS) WILL EVER SAY THAT SUCH OPEN SUPPORT FOR OUR MORAL PRINCIPLES BY THE WESTERN COUNTRIES CAN DO US ANY HARM."

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13. AMERICAN CRITICS OF THE CARTER POLICY SUGGEST ALSO THAT IT MAY PREVENT AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON VITAL MATTERS SUCH AS STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION. EXPERTS HERE DO NOT SEE MUCH IN THAT VIEW, BELIEVING THAT SOVIET LEADERS WILL GENERALLY MAKE THEIR DECISIONS ON THE BASIS OF A COOL CALCULATION OF THE BALANCE OF ADVANTAGE.

14. BUT AGAIN, SUPPORTERS OF THE PRESIDENT'S APPROACH SHOULD RECOGNIZE A DANGER THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL TAKE IT AS INDICATING A RETURN TO COLD WAR ATTITUDES--AS A DEVICE, FOR EXAMPLE, TO BUILD DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR HIGHER ARMS SPENDING. MR. CARTER MAY AT FIRST HAVE BEEN INSUFFICIENTLY SENSITIVE TO HOW THE POLICY MIGHT BE SEEN IN MOSCOW. BUT HE HAS NOW ACTED TO MAKE VERY CLEAR THAT HIS MOTIVATIONS ARE NOT PROVOCATIVE, THAT HE IS TRYING NOT TO CHANGE OTHER COUNTRIES' POLITICAL SYSTEMS BUT TO PROTECT BASIC HUMAN DECENCIES.

15. THE CRITICS FOCUS TOO MUCH ON THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO MR. CARTER'S POLICY. IT IS DIRECTED AT BRUTALITY ANYWHERE, WITHOUT REGARD TO IDEOLOGY. AND IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY HAVING AN EFFECT ON THE FRAMEWORK OF DIPLOMACY. RECENTLY THE SHAH OF IRAN RECEIVED AN OFFICIAL OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FOR A TALK ABOUT IRAN'S POLITICAL PRISONERS--AN ACT HARDLY IMAGINABLE BEFORE JIMMY CARTER. THE ACTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE HERE LAST WEEK IN CONDEMNING PRESIDENT AMIN OF UGANDA COULD PROBABLY ALSO HAVE COME ONLY AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF THE CARTER POLICY.

16. SPEAKING OUT HAS ITS RISKS, BUT SAYING NOTHING WHEN CONFRONTED WITH SAVAGERY IS MORE CORRUPTING. ONE
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DISTINGUISHED AMBASSADOR REMARKED: "A HUNDRED AND
FIFTY YEARS A;O PEOPLE SAID IT WAS WRONG TO TALK AGAINST
SLAVERY--IT WOULD LEAD TO FURTHER CRUELTY. IN THE LONG

RUN, IT MUST DO GOOD TO TALK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS."
END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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